

STUDENT HISTORIANS: A PRIMARY SOURCE & TEXTBOOK-REVISIONING EXPLORATION OF JAPANESE INTERVENTION & OCCUPATION OF KOREA

GRADE: 10

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TOPIC/THEME: History (Japanese Occupation)

TIME REQUIRED: Three class periods of approximately 50 minutes each, with an optional one-day extension

BACKGROUND:

In 1876, Japan forced open three of Korea's ports via the Treaty of Kanghwa. This aggressive move came despite the fact that Japan itself had been closed to foreign trade until 1854. The Japanese proclaimed that as a result, Korea was independent from its status as a tributary state of the Qing Dynasty. However, in reality, the Treaty of Kanghwa was an unequal treaty that enabled the Japanese to ultimately push through their political, military, and economic agenda. Still, the Treaty of Kanghwa ushered in an era of enlightenment in Korea, as King Kojong, the last of the Chosŏn Dynasty, promoted reforms and a self-strengthening of his nation. Such action was Korea's attempt, albeit ultimately unsuccessful, to make itself resistant to outside influence; it was also in response to the Tonghak movement and later peasant revolt of 1894, a people's movement against the government, yangban (upper class), and foreigners. To put down the rebellion and make reforms on its own terms, the Chosŏn government requested Japanese military aid. In the end, the Kabo Reforms of 1894-96 addressed many of the Tonghak grievances, resulting in a declaration of Korea's sovereignty, the abolition of class differences, and the writing of official documents in Han'gŭl (Korean phonetic script). Although the goal of the Kabo Reforms was to establish a strong, independent nation, they actually furthered Japan's claims to Korea as a protectorate and established a legal foundation for Japanese imperialism in Korea. Additionally, not everyone welcomed the reforms: many younger Koreans were eager to emulate Japan, which was seen as modern, while, many older Koreans continued to follow the Chinese Confucian model.

Meanwhile, Meiji Japan was embarking on an ambitious modernization and industrialization program. Japan revealed its strength with its success in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95. Due to geopolitics, Korea was entangled in this conflict, and the war was mainly fought on the Korean Peninsula. The Qing's defeat officially signaled Korea's independence from China. However, this also gave the Japanese a foothold in Korea, bringing them one step closer to colonization of Korea. Feeling this pressure and seeking to exert renewed national integrity, in 1897, the Daehan Empire, or Korean Empire, replaced the Chosŏn Dynasty. During this time, the Kwangmu Restoration further westernized Korea.

Russia also believed it had a stake in Korea, due to its construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway. The Japanese were victorious in the ensuing Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, a fact that surprised western powers. Japan's success in this war altered the balance of power in East Asia. After the war, Korea became a Japanese protectorate. Eager to flex its muscles and prove its status as an imperial power, Japan officially annexed Korea in 1910. Korea remained under Japanese occupation until the end of World War II. The Japanese colonial period can be divided

into three different phases: 1) the Military Period (1910-1919), whereby the rule was brutal and suppressive, 2) Cultural Rule, or Change by Choice (1920-1931), the years of cultural accommodation following the March First 1919 Independence Movement, and 3) the Wartime Period, or Change by Coercion (1931-1945), during which time the Japanese sought to repress Korean culture and forcibly assimilate Koreans to Japanese customs. Against this backdrop, ordinary Koreans used a variety of methods to both subtly and overtly resist Japanese rule and their culture's decimation. Organized events such as the March First 1919 independence struggle suggest that many Koreans wished to resist imperialistic invasion, in the context of current global events (World War I had ended, and self-determination was becoming popular for the peoples of colonized or occupied lands).

Even during the more relaxed colonial period, any attempt to resist Japanese rule or express Korean nationalism was met with brutality. At its worst, the Japanese government suppressed Koreans with harsh rule and tried to liquidate Korean culture and language. Koreans were forced to worship the Japanese Emperor and choose Japanese names, and over 3,000 Koreans were interned at the Sōdaemun Prison. One of the most brutal manifestations of the occupation was the Japanese government's use of "Comfort Women," or sexual slaves, to satisfy their soldiers.

CURRICULUM CONNECTION:

This lesson will be taught in the context of a unit on imperialism. Many modern global history courses and textbooks examine European imperialism in Africa and Asia. Japan is noted as the "Asian exception" and lauded for swiftly industrializing, and then becoming an imperial power itself. Although most textbooks mention that Japan colonized Korea, often, nothing is said about the colonized, other than that the Japanese were harsh rulers after Korea became a colony. This lesson seeks to enhance students' understanding of the topic of imperialism. It adds another layer to the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars, contextualizes events like China's May 4th Independence Movement, and also helps students make the later connection to Comfort Women when studying the Rape of Nanking.

CONNECTION TO STUDENTS' LIVES:

Learning about this topic will give students a richer understanding of imperialism, from a different perspective. This lesson explores the impact of Japanese intervention in Korea through the use of personal narratives, images, and other texts. It also seeks to address the various internal and external modes of resistance and examine how Korean culture both persevered and was altered under Japanese rule. Primary source documents aid in this process, making the material more accessible and relevant to students. Students can question their textbook's treatment of the subject and make the connection that textbooks are not the final historical authority. In examining the rationale for making Korean surnames Japanese, students can consider the significance of their own names. By exploring one country's domination of another, students can consider instances in which they have been made to assimilate or resist.

OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS:

1. Students will be able to analyze a variety of documents pertaining to Korea's interaction with and occupation by Japan so as to create an additional section in their textbook about Korea during the Age of Imperialism.

NCSS Standard: Theme II: TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE

Learners will read, reconstruct, and interpret documents and use methods of historical inquiry to engage in the examination of sophisticated sources. They will evaluate the historical accounts made by others and reconstruct the past.

NY Standard: 2 (World History), Key Idea 1. Analyze historic events from around the world by examining accounts written from different perspectives.

2. Students will be able to connect and compare Korea's interaction with foreign powers and its subsequent colonization to other colonies and imperial powers during the Age of Imperialism; this will contextualize this aspect of Korean history.

NCSS Standard: Theme IX: GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

Learners will think systematically about national and global decisions and analyze policies and their actions and consequences. They will explore the different types of global connections that have existed in the past.

NY Standard: 2 (World History), Key Idea 2. Establish timeframes and examine themes across time and within cultures.

Common Core Standards:

RH 1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources

RH 2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source

RH 3 Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text

RH 4 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics

RH 7 Integrate quantitative or technical analysis with qualitative analysis

RH 9 Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources

WHST 1 Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content

WHST 2 Write informative/explanatory texts

WHST 3 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience

WHST 9 Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research

SL 1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions

SL 2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- Handout 1: Bernard Partridge Vintage *Punch* political cartoon (1901)
- Handout 2A and 2B: Japanese Intervention and Occupation Timelines
- Handout 3: Compare and Connect Worksheet
- Handout 4: Japanese Intervention and Occupation Documents (needs to be copied and cut-out by teacher before class distribution)

- Scissors to cut and trim the documents in Handout 4
- Envelopes, pocket folders, or brown paper bags (containers) to hold the trimmed documents from Handout 4. You will need one container for each small group (3-5 students, depending on class size and preference).
- Handout 5: Document Exploration Recording Worksheet (graphic organizer for students to record their source analysis)
- Markers
- Printer paper, construction paper, and/or poster paper

INTRODUCTION and EXPLORATION:

This lesson assumes that students do *not* have much background knowledge about Korea during the Age of Imperialism, but that they do have knowledge of Qing China and Japan from the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate through the Meiji Restoration. Simply explain that we will begin with a political cartoon that places Korea within the context of what we already know about imperialism in East Asia. During the next few lessons, we will see how imperialism manifested itself in Korea and explore the way in which our textbook treats this subject.

PROCEDURE:

THE DELIVERY OF THE CONTENT:

Day 1:

This part of the lesson contextualizes Korea's role as it tried to break from Qing influence, strengthen itself, and deflect Japanese intervention.

1. Distribute Handout 1, Bernard Partridge's 1901 political cartoon from *Vintage Punch*. Ask students to view the cartoon and jot down an initial, quick response at the bottom of the page. Then guide students through a series of questions, aimed at digging deeper: *What do you see? What does the bear represent? What is significant about the figure representing Japan? How does it portray Japan? Can you ascertain the time period? What gives you clues? What is the meaning of the "Paws Off" caption? Why is Korea part of this conflict? What role does China play in this cartoon?* The goal of this cartoon analysis is to explain the geopolitics and Korea's precarious position, as a pawn in the Russo-Japanese War.
2. Pass out Handout 2, the Japanese Intervention in and Occupation of Korea Timeline. Use the background section (above) to briefly explain the history of Korea's relationship with Japan and China. The handout has space for students to record notes. At this stage in the lesson, only go over Handout 2A, events from 1876-1910. (There is also a marker for 1392, the start of the Chosŏn Dynasty.) This will give students a foundation so they are able to understand the context of Japan's occupation of Korea.
3. Distribute Handout 3, the Compare and Connect Worksheet. The purpose of this exercise is to encourage students to see the relationship between Korea, Japan, China, and European colonies. Model the first analogy while eliciting responses from students. For example, The *Treaty of Kanghwa* in Korea is comparable to the *Treaty of Kanagawa* in Japan because *both were unequal treaties that forced open East Asian ports and gave the dominant power trading privileges and extraterritorial rights*. Then have students work either by themselves or with a neighbor to brainstorm at least three more comparisons and connections. Go over as a class. (Examples include the Tonghak Rebellion to the Taiping Rebellion, the Kabo

- Reforms to the Meiji Restoration or Chinese Self-Strengthening Movement, the Korean Empire to the Qing or Meiji, and Korea as a protectorate compared to protectorates of European powers.)
4. Ask students to make a prediction: *based on what you know about Meiji Japan and also European imperialism, predict what life was like in Korea under Japanese colonization.* Students should jot down a response, and then “turn and talk” with their neighbor. Ask a few students or student pairs to share with the whole class.
 5. Assign homework: *What does your textbook say about Korea during this time? How much space is devoted to Korea? What do you think accounts for this?*

Day 2

This part of the lesson provides students with primary source documents from the different periods of Japanese intervention and colonialism. Students are to act as historians, who will piece together the way Japan treated Korea and the way Koreans responded to Japanese rule.

1. Before class begins, prepare the documents from Handout 4 by copying and cutting out the number of sets needed. Jumble up the order of the documents and place each set in your designated containers.
2. Briefly discuss the homework questions. *Why does our textbook devote such little space to Korea during the Age of Imperialism? Why is the information we learned yesterday absent?* Remind students that this is another example of our textbook not being *the* authority on any given topic.
3. Divide students into groups of 3-5, depending on class size and preference. Explain that students will be historians today. Since our textbook is of little help, the goal is to use primary sources to figure out what life was like for average Koreans during various stages of Japanese interference and colonization. Explain that each document is labeled with a title and date, and that students will need to categorize, analyze, and interpret them, with the help of the Handout 5 graphic organizer. They should not worry about completing all 20 documents. Rather, they should work as efficiently and thoroughly as possible to get an overall sense of the different phases of Japanese intervention/occupation, the actions of Japanese officials and citizens, and the various Korean responses/methods of resistance – both subtle and overt – to life under colonization. (Teachers might wish to reduce the number of documents for certain groups or assign specific required documents, with the rest being recommended if time permits – this allows for differentiation. Additionally, teachers might wish to write a scaffold question to accompany each document.) Once the directions have been explained, distribute one container of documents to each group. Instruct students to dump out and begin to analyze the images. Have students sort the documents into a chronological order so that they can begin to make sense of the different periods of Japanese intervention/occupation. Also encourage them to make note of the similarities, differences, and distinctions amongst them. Instruct each student to record his/her group’s collective observations on Handout 5.
4. Assign homework: ask students to complete Handout 2B, the Japanese Occupation of Korea Timeline, based on their in-class document analysis.

THE APPLICATION OF THE CONTENT:

Day 3

This aspect of the lesson encourages students to apply their newly learned content knowledge.

1. Allow time for a debriefing of the previous activity and select a few of the documents to discuss. *How did students' initial predictions match the reality of Japanese colonialism?* Students should understand the defining characteristics of the four different time periods: pre-1910, 1910-1919, 1920-1931, and 1931-1945. [For more information, refer to Hildi Kang's *Under the Black Umbrella*, accessible [here](#) as a Google Book.]
2. Students are to reassemble into their prior groupings. Explain that they are to use what they now know to create a portion of a revamped textbook section on Korea during the Age of Imperialism. Assign each group to a particular period: pre-1910, 1910-1919, 1920-1931, or 1931-1945. Depending on class size and preference, more than one group might separately work on the same time period.
3. Encourage students to use images, narratives, and any other documents they encountered – or wish to find on-line – to support their text. They may be creative in the layout, using printer paper, construction paper, or poster paper, and follow or alter the format of their own textbook as they see fit. Groups should pay careful attention to the accuracy, clarity, and presentation of their material.

Creating an addition for their textbook allows students to develop higher order thinking skills by inviting them to challenge the idea that their textbook is the final authority. They will become more sophisticated thinkers as they take the sources they have analyzed and craft them into a work that seeks to correct the glaring omission of an entire historical chapter.

Optional Day 4:

Critiquing one's work is often a valuable part of the learning process. If time allows, this activity validates students' efforts, allows them to see things in a way they previously didn't, and encourages them to approach future textbook chapters with more skepticism.

1. If necessary, have students complete their updated textbook sections.
2. Have each group present its work. Allow time for students to question one another and provide feedback on the accuracy, clarity, and presentation of the material.

ASSESSMENT:

1. Successful and thoughtful completion of Handout 2 (Japanese Intervention in and Occupation of Korea Timeline) and Handout 5 (Document Exploration Recording Worksheet) to gauge students' work as historians [Standard II]
2. Development (and, if time allows, presentation) of textbook revisions [Standard II]
3. Successful and thoughtful completion of Handout 3 (Compare and Connect Worksheet), targeted questions directed to students during the analysis of Handout 1 (Bernard Partridge's *Punch* cartoon), and informal discussions based on homework assignments after Day 1 and Day 2 to gauge students' understanding of global interconnectedness [Standard IX]

RESOURCES:

Asia for Educators: An Initiative of the Weatherhead East Asian Institute. "1900-1950: A Half-Century of Crisis and Achievement - Korea." Accessed August 2, 2011.

http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/tps/1900_ko.htm.

Asia for Educators: An Initiative of the Weatherhead East Asian Institute. "Imperialism, War, and Revolution in East Asia: 1900-1945; Korea as a Colony of Japan." Accessed August 2, 2011. http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/webcourse/key_points/kp_11.htm.

Eckert, Carter J., Ki-baik Lee, Young Ick Lew, Michael Robinson, and Edward W. Wagner. *Korea Old and New: A History*. Seoul: Ilchokak for Korea Institute, Harvard University Press, 1990.

Kang, Hildi. *Under the Black Umbrella: Voices from Colonial Korea, 1910-1945*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001.

Kim, Michael. "Korean History." Korean Studies Workshop 2011. Korea University. Seoul. 14 July 2011.

The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan. *Dignity and Justice to the Customs of military sexual slavery by Japan!!* Seoul, 2010.

The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan. "Women and War." Accessed August 2, 2011. <http://www.womenandwar.net/english/>.

Museum Plaques, Seodaemun Prison History Hall, Seoul, 20 July 2011.

Nahm, Andrew. *Korea: Tradition and Transformation*. Seoul: Hollym, 1996.

HANDOUT 1: BERNARD PARTRIDGE VINTAGE *PUNCH* POLITICAL CARTOON

“Paws Off.”



http://www.vintagepunch.com/catalog/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=3_4&products_id=48

HANDOUT 2A: JAPANESE INTERVENTION IN KOREA TIMELINE

Can be accessed [here](#) as a PDF Google Doc (1st page)

HANDOUT 2B: JAPANESE OCCUPATION OF KOREA TIMELINE

Can be accessed through the above link (2nd page)

HANDOUT 3: COMPARE AND CONNECT WORKSHEET

The purpose of this exercise is to see the relationship between Korea, Japan, China, and European colonies during the Age of Imperialism. Your goal is to work with a partner to devise at least three analogies, based on the format below:

The (Event/Concept) in Korea is comparable to the (Event/Concept) in
(Japan/China/European colonies) because (description of relationship).

Guided Example:

The **Treaty of Kanghwa** in Korea is comparable to the _____

in **Japan** because _____

Your Turn:

1) The _____ in Korea is comparable to the

_____ in _____

because _____

2) The _____ in Korea is comparable to the

_____ in _____

because _____

3) The _____ in Korea is comparable to the

_____ in _____

because _____

Other examples, after our class discussion:

4) The _____ in Korea is comparable to the

_____ in _____

because _____

5) The _____ in Korea is comparable to the

_____ in _____

because _____

6) The _____ in Korea is comparable to the

_____ in _____

because _____

7) The _____ in Korea is comparable to the

_____ in _____

because _____

8) The _____ in Korea is comparable to the

_____ in _____

because _____

HANDOUT 4: JAPANESE INTERVENTION AND OCCUPATION DOCUMENTS

Can be accessed [here](#) as a Word file Google Doc (*may not be supported by all web browsers, but all the links can be clicked in this format*)

Can be accessed [here](#) as a PDF Google Doc (*supported by all web browsers, but not all the links work in this format*)

HANDOUT 5: DOCUMENT EXPLORATION RECORDING WORKSHEET

Can be accessed [here](#) as a PDF Google Doc